

Chamberlain's Struggles

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Category: Dark Crystal

Genre: Adventure, Friendship

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2016-04-12 10:49:04

Updated: 2016-04-27 11:19:59

Packaged: 2016-04-27 19:19:36

Rating: T

Chapters: 8

Words: 14,625

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: Sil the Chamberlain has to go through many struggles. He is forced into a new adventure of life outside the castle.

1. Chapter 1

It had been only 600 plus years since the Great Division of the urSkeks. The quiet urRu or Mystics lived in their quiet valley, doing their own wizard like magical stuff. The other half, the Skeksis, lived in their castle and did things that were not always the nicest to other beings of their world, but did invite other beings to serve them in the castle.

Gelflings and Podlings were the top other beings that served the Skeksis in the castle. Each Skeksis had their share of servants.

Life for the moment seemed harmonious enough among what was currently going on, but things would soon change.

The Skeksis had had much vigor and energy when they had first started out. They were more into a middle life right now. Their bodies had slowed down quite a bit, but were still able to do quite many things.

There were currently 16 Skeksis and urRu right now. One of each had died at the beginning of their time when things had been confusing at first. And one of them that was called Mal the Hunter had died not too long ago. One of his hunting trips had gotten him into trouble out in the wilderness.

The Skeksis did individual chores around the Castle, but would come together, not gratefully, but to have meals and ceremonies.

The secretary of state, Sil the Chamberlain, had been falling deeper out of the So the Emperor's favor. He kept on trying to get the attention back on himself, but every try was failing.

Almost not too long ago, Tek the Scientist found a way to keep youth showing. It came from Gelfling essence. It was only for the Emperor alone.

Lately, the Emperor's new favorite among the clan was Lach the Collector. He kept on bringing in Gelflings for their essence. And collecting many other things as well.

Chamberlain was jealous of the attention the Collector got from the Emperor. The others also noticed his jealousy too. Some even teased him about how he was falling out of favor with their leader.

Most of his clan hated his wheedling voice. Sil was sure he had allies among them, though he knew his closest one was called La the Illustrator.

La was also one of the most unfairly treated ones. He preferred to be called a she instead. She had a finger that had gotten injured and had to add some armor to it to protect it. It kept her finger stable to write, as she did a lot of that.

La had gotten along so well with Sil, that she soon started to call him her brother. But after many trines, their relationship had begun to change even more so. They began to get even closer than what Skeksis could normally handle.

Most relationships were nothing more than just working relationships among the Skeksis, and it was mostly done with a lot of hostility too. Most of them couldn't hardly stand one another, but Sil and La were different.

They had more of a real friendship going and new feelings were surfacing.

After awhile, they did tell each other that they loved each other, but it had to be kept secret from the others. Their Emperor had forbidden any kind of loving relationships. If they were found out, there would be trouble.

Sil often went to La for comfort too after he had had a bad day with the Emperor or Lach, or even Ung the Garthim Master giving him a hard time.

One night, the Chamberlain was so upset that he went to the Illustrator's chambers to see if he could get some comfort from his friend.

She had been doing some work for the Ok the Historian, but he had gone to bed.

Sil entered feeling down, that another attempt had gone unnoticed much and brushed aside.

La noticed his whimper that he usually did. His voice had quite a touch of sadness this time. She put her pen down and went to go comfort him.

She knew it wasn't fair the way he and she were treated as nearly like the lowest of the court.

"Why can't the Emperor see how useful I am to him?" Sil whined.

"He never sees your potential to give great advice anymore. But keep in mind that you have me to come to with your thoughts." La said.

"Thank you." Sil said and he gave her a nuzzle.

They both went to hugging and nuzzling, and in their own way, kissing. And that night, everything changed. They went even further for the first time and they went to sleep in La's bed.

The next morning, Sil woke up in La's arms. They both didn't have their main robes on, but he knew that he needed to get up before Ok or any of the others came in here and saw them together like this.

He pushed himself up from La's bed. His movement woke her up too.

He began to get himself dressed in his regular robes. While he was dressing, La kept on looking at him with her bright eyes.

"It's better if we are not seen like this, that much is true... it could be dangerous... Yetâ€|" La began.

Sil turned to her, feeling nervous. "What do you mean?"

"What we shared last night means really much to me... I will see to keep it secret, for both our sakes... but I want you to know... I always... had dreamed of a moment like that with youâ€|" She said.

He finished getting his robes on, then asked, "Even... time ago, when we were just allies?..."

She replied, "Yes."

He felt a little embarrassed, but he gave a little smile and said, "I believed you felt disgusted by the idea of mating... so, I never asked you..."

La laughed at that. She got up from her bed and went over to him. She gave him a nuzzle, then said, "If I had only known! I would have told you trines and trines ago how much you weigh in my... heart... Sil... now, go! Don't be seen!... Don't be caught... or they may make uncomfortable questions... I will see you later somewhere... my mateâ€|"

Sil left her bed chamber after that in a hurry, to not be seen by any possible passers. Especially SkekOk. But he had a new feeling in his mind of how much he cared for her.

****Beta read by a deviantArt friend, SkekLa. ****

****The oc Skeksis, La the Illustrator is hers. I have permission to use her. ****

****This was inspired by the movie, the Legends books, and other movies. ****

****No flames please and just enjoy. Love to hear how you think of the story. I know the Skeksis are portrayed as evil, but in the beginning, they had a somewhat lighter side. I use that a bit more and their darker side too. ****

****And for events later in the story, Jim Henson had said that he and his helpers viewed the Skeksis as a mixture in between the genders. SkekLa wants to be called a she instead of a he like all Skeksis are usually called. ****

2. Chapter 2

There were a few more of those loving nights between them over the next few weeks. They always made sure it was safe before doing anything that was so against Skeksis rules.

But during the day, Chamberlain was finding that his feud with the Collector was growing.

Chamberlain had to find out what the Collector was up to in his secret dealings. He could be good at blackmailing others when he wanted to.

He had some animals approach him and he wanted them to keep an eye on things from the others, especially on Lach's secrets.

After he sent his little animal spies off to watch his fellow Skeksis for new secrets to pop up, the Historian even caught him talking to himself. Saying to himself how the Emperor would praise him for finding out the best news.

"That just won't happen, Chamberlain." Ok spoke up.

"Agh!" Sil was surprised for a moment.

"You've been out of his favor for too long, Chamberlain. Some fear you. Some loathe you. Nobody likes you! Praise from the Emperor, for you? You'll calcify before that happens!" The Historian walked by him.

Chamberlain glared after him. It didn't matter. He wasn't going to give up.

Eventually, some few days later, one of his little animal spies came to him and told him that it had heard that the Collector was stealing and keeping Gelfling essence for himself.

That made Chamberlain so happy to hear. The Emperor would hear of it and the Collector's favor would fall. This had to work.

He started on his way to the throne room where the Emperor was bound to be, when he did run into the Collector on his way there.

"I know of your treachery, Lach!" Sil said.

"What are you talking about?" Lach demanded.

"I know of your taking essence. That's for the Emperor."

"No one would believe you, Chamberlain."

"I challenge you to the Trial by Fire!" Sil said.

Lach had a feeling he and Sil would eventually get into a dual as things had been heating up between them.

"Alright. And if I win, you keep your beak shut!"

"If I win, you admit your treachery."

"Fine, you got me. We notify others of the challenge." Lach said.

The two rivals went to the throne room and announced their competition.

The other Skeksis were shocked and surprised, and some were not so much. They had seen how those two had been in rivalry for some time now at the most.

The Emperor approved the challenge. They were all dying for some new action. And immediately after, they headed to the fire chamber.

La had just come out of her study and saw Sil and the others marching somewhere. She didn't know what was going on, but when she saw all the others following, she knew it was important. She followed too, at the end of the line, especially since it concerned her lover.

She was a little surprised it was the fire chamber. What would be going on in there? She knew it was one way to settle some disputes.

Chamberlain and Collector took their spots and there was the scattering of the others to watch. La stood near to Sil's side. Now she knew he was in this mess.

Two other Skeksis came forward and began putting big rocks into the two rival's hands.

Chamberlain knew he had to win this. He glanced briefly to his right and he saw La over there. She gave him a questioning look, but he didn't have time to explain right now. Another rock was added. He nearly let go of the rocks he held, but he turned back to the situation at hand.

The Collector tried to taunt him that he was going to lose.

Sil glared. A fourth rock was added to each of them. His arms began to shake. He was trying to hold on. He couldn't lose. He saw Lach wasn't hardly shaking at all.

Chamberlain knew it. The essence was making him stronger. He knew he didn't have the strength for much longer.

When a fifth rock was added, that was it. Chamberlain couldn't take it anymore and he fell to the floor. He grunted in pain.

The others all laughed.

"Ha! Ha! I win!" Lach cackled. He put his rocks down.

The others began to disperse. La stayed.

Sil raised himself up. "No! You don't!" He got up. He began to make a move.

La wondered what he was doing.

"Sire! Sire, wait!"

"No you don't, Chamberlain!" The Collector turned. He was going to make sure his rival didn't tell. "You lost and you won't tell!"

"Just watch me!" Sil looked behind him. He tried to run to the head of the line.

"Sire! The Collector had committed treachery! He's been stealing from you!" Sil cried out.

"Don't be a sore loser, Chamberlain." Zok said.

"I'm not. I know this-" Sil was cut off by the Emperor's staff hitting him in the arm.

"Enough of this nonsense. You lost and you can enjoy the victory for SkekLach, or there will be other consequences, Chamberlain." The Emperor declared.

"Please, Sire, you must listen to me. You don't know what he's been drinking." Sil tried again.

"Enough!"

The others left him alone, laughing at his expense.

Sil growled to himself. He stayed there. Why wouldn't the Emperor listen to him?

"I believe you." He heard his lover's voice.

Chamberlain turned to the Illustrator. "The Collector was so much stronger and he shouldn't have been that strong. I could see he cheated you out of the competition."

"Yes, with stealing the essence."

"Are you okay?"

"Little shaken from the weight and the fall, but fine. But I must still keep trying to warn the Emperor." Sil tried and he went the same path as the others. La followed him.

The clan had gone to the dining hall ready for their midday meal.

"Stay here, La." Sil said. La would stay back.

Sil approached the Emperor again, if a little more cautiously.

Chamberlain began his explanation again and this time, it didn't turn out good at all.

"I will hear no more of this! You are stripped of your duties, for good! Take him!" The Emperor ordered.

Chamberlain had known there were possibilities of consequence that could end in this. He began to slink away, but others cornered him and were more than happy to strip him of his job and robes.

La was the only one that didn't partake in it. She didn't like seeing this. Her lover had only been trying to warn the Emperor of the Collector's stealing and this was how he was repaid?

Sil screamed with fear that he might be killed. Then the Emperor put an end to it.

"You are banished, Chamberlain!" He yelled at the now naked and shamed Sil, who was clinging to the wall, panting.

The others had been looking forward to this for a long time. All but La.

"Now, for the victory feast! You are to be commended on your victory, SkekLach." So said.

The Collector smiled at his leader and sneered at the Chamberlain.

Sil glared at his enemy. He finally caught his breath enough to get away from the wall and pick up some of his clothes. He began to leave the dining hall.

La began to follow him, but the Historian stopped her. "He had been nothing but trouble for all of us. You are not following him, Illustrator."

She tried to walk around him and got backhanded by SkekUng. "You heard the Emperor. Now leave it be."

La held her face.

"Sit down, SkekLa." The Emperor ordered. "After this, you are going to complete that paperwork for me."

La didn't want to abandon her lover, but the others weren't giving her much of a choice.

"SkekLach, you and your pets make sure the Chamberlain leaves." The Emperor ordered.

"Yes, my Lord."

Lach went to his collection room and got his three most vicious animals and they headed out to do the job.

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Chamberlain went to a private section to where he could at least clothe himself. He felt disgraced being without robes on. This was the worst humiliation any Skeksis could have.

He had just finished clothing himself when he heard a sound behind him.

He turned and saw the vicious animals coming at him. "Get him, boys!" Sil heard the order.

Sil knew he had to move. He moved out as fast as he could. The animals were nearly right on his tail right now.

When he was chased to the entrance, he managed to get outside and then he slipped on the rough ground outside and fell.

He looked up just in time as the pets of his rival had caught up to him and were now standing there, growling and had their teeth bared at him. Lach then moved in.

"You are no longer welcome here and I was to see that you got your tail out of here!" The Collector said.

"One day, you will fall." Sil said.

"I don't think so, now get out before I do sick my pets on you." Lach said.

Sil got to his feet and began walking away, starting for the north. Lach saw him off.

He hated saying goodbye to the only life he had ever known.

Once the Chamberlain was far enough away from the castle, Lach and his pets went back inside, certain he wouldn't come back in.

Chamberlain looked back sadly. He didn't want to leave his lover behind, but it was clear they weren't letting her leave. She had tried to follow, but they forced her to stay. Now just staying alive out in the wilderness would be up to him. He didn't know where to go, but he knew he could be attacked if he tried to sneak back in.

He might come back for La when he found a suitable home away from the castle. Then they could do as they pleased. He began heading north.

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The other Skeksis were ever so pleased that Chamberlain was now gone. They went on to eat their lunch in peace. The only one that felt otherwise was the Illustrator. She was unhappy about it. She hoped Sil would be ok out there.

She glared at the Collector angrily. He was the biggest liar. He had the Emperor completely fooled. She would try to tell the Emperor herself if she had to. But he could even be harsh on her too. She had to watch her back too.

3. Chapter 3

Chamberlain's stomach gave a loud growl. He was very hungry.

It had been the midday mealtime when his banishment came. But now, he couldn't even go back to eat.

Sil had made it to some grasslands. His feet were tired and a little sore. He looked around. Nothing seemed edible out here. He knew he wasn't a good hunter. That was the Garthim's job, to hunt for food.

He would travel some more. If necessary, he would force himself to eat some plants if no small animal could be caught. He would try his hand at catching some small animal first. But it wouldn't be easy with all this medium sized grass in the way.

He began moving the stalks of grass apart to look for something, but anything he saw scattered into a underground home or just moved too fast for him to grab. But it didn't stop him from trying.

Soon, he came to the middle of the field and he stepped on a loud twig, and the noise alerted some big animals that were out in the field too. They lifted their heads above the grass and they saw something big approaching them. Evidently, they had been resting.

It was a pair of them. They began growling and approaching the intruder.

Chamberlain heard them and now knew he was out of luck. His eyes widened as he recognized these beasts as Rakkidas! Now he knew he was in trouble. He knew how dangerous these creatures could be.

At home, the Garthim or his rivals might have attacked these creatures with weapons, but here he was, out in the wilderness, alone and completely unarmed, with the exception of his own teeth and talons. But with no place to run to to protect himself, he knew this might be the end of him.

He swallowed nervously and looked around, for anything he might be able to use as a weapon or to hide. He began backing up.

The Rakkidas kept on stalking him. Their jaws were drooling with saliva, obviously hungry.

"Please, don't do this." Chamberlain held out his hands, backing away. The creatures didn't listen.

Then, Sil turned and tried to run from the monsters, though he wasn't as fast a runner as when he was younger.

But the Rakkidas were faster. They burst into a run too and caught up with him rather quickly.

Sil had managed to escape Rakkida in the past, but not this time. The first one that caught him caught his left thigh.

Chamberlain screamed in pain and was stopped. He tried using his hands to get the beast's jaws off his leg. But the second one came

around and grabbed onto Sil's right arm.

The Skeksis screamed again. He knew this was the end. He tried using his left hand to try to free his other arm, and the Rakkida, using its right foot claws, scratched Sil's other hand, leaving some bad scratch marks, bleeding badly.

Despite the clothes he wore, the beasts had made contact with Sil's skin and blood was soaking everything.

And Sil was trying his hardest to get away with struggling and the beast on his right arm even kicked him in his lower chest and upper stomach, knocking the wind out of him at one point. There was even a crack heard. Now it was just a matter of time before the end came for him. He hadn't even been out here a whole day yet.

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Not too far away from the attack site, there was a shepherd Gelfling boy named Byron. He wore brown clothes and he had dark hair and blue eyes.

He was more of a loner in his home village, so he had the job of looking after this village's Mounders.

The Mounders were grazing peacefully until there was loud screaming and snarling to the west of the field they were in. Byron was alerted by the screaming. The soft voice almost sounded feminine. A female could be in trouble!

He got onto the lead Mounder and they went over to investigate the sounds of an attack.

When they got over there, Byron saw two Rakkidas tearing apart some big creature.

"Stop them, guys!" Byron ordered his Mounders and the Mounders went over to deal with the Rakkidas.

The Mounders went in and instantly gave the Rakkidas mighty kicks, making them release their victim. Then they tried to retaliate one the Mounders, but got more hard, good kicks from them and that made them back off. Then they took off running.

After that was over, Byron went back to examine the victim. He got off his Mounder and went over to see something big and grey lying on the ground, unconscious and its blood soaking the ground and its clothes. It was barely breathing.

"I don't know what this creature is, but we need to get it back to the village for help." Byron said to the lead Mounder. It grumbled back to him as if to answer.

With some help from two Mounders pulling on the clothing, they pulled the hurt Skeksis onto the lead Mounder's back, Byron by his side. He had to hurry if he was going to save this creature's life.

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Byron got Chamberlain to his village and he went to the home of the healer. She was a mid-aged woman with fair shoulder length hair. She was an expertise of healing of all sorts. She could also sense certain auras.

Byron knocked on the door. The healer opened the door. "Yes, Byron. What is going on?" She asked.

"Wyneth. I have found a wounded creature out in the field. It was attacked by two Rakkidas. They nearly killed it." He said.

"Let me see the poor thing." Wyneth said.

Byron had his Mounder lay down and Wyneth got onto the Mounder to see the Skeksis lying there, practically torn apart.

Wyneth was surprised by this creature. She had never seen one like it before. But she could sense something about him.

"I don't know if it's worth saving, Byron. It's lost a lot of blood. And there's something off about it. With the spikes, the talons and the teeth, it is clearly a killer itself." She said.

"We can't just abandon him or her." Byron said. "I heard the screaming. It sounded kind of female like. Please, Wyneth, we have to try."

She looked down again at the wounded creature. "Alright, but its going to go into the cage just to make sure it's not dangerous."

Byron smiled.

Wyneth had a sanctuary to where even huge Landstriders could be treated for injuries. The Mounder took Sil there.

Chamberlain was slowly and gently rolled onto a mat like bed. Wyneth then began doing an exam.

She found the right arm to be completely torn to shreds. The left hand was scratched up. And the left thigh and leg was torn up good. She then felt on the torso. She heard a crack in one of the lower ribs. This creature had obviously been hit good in the ribs for it to break.

"I will try to save it, but Byron, don't get your hopes up for this one. It's so hurt that it may not survive the night." Wyneth warned him.

"I know, but we have to try." He said.

Wyneth got some scissors and a knife and began cutting away the clothing on the arms and torso. The legs didn't have clothing on them.

Then she began sewing up what wounds she saw were the most open. Some stitches were put in his upper right arm and in his left thigh. Then bandages were applied to the wounds.

After the wounds were taken care of, Wyneth needed to take care of

the ribs. There wasn't much she could do for him there, but just bandage him up and he would have to take it easy.

With Byron's help, the two Gelfling got bandages around Sil's middle. They managed to maneuver around his spikes on his back. Then he was covered with a blanket.

Chamberlain was already in the treatment cage. Now that the injuries were treated, they could only leave him there to wake up on his own. Lucky he had remained unconscious through the whole procedure.

"Now all we can do is wait." Wyneth said. "You best get the Mounders settled down for the night. I'll watch him for now."

"I want to be here overnight. I'll be back soon." Byron said and left, to get his Mounders settled to bed for the night.

After he left, Wyneth now walked outside the cage and locked it up. She still had a bad feeling about this creature. But some creatures could be surprising, she knew.

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Across the land, in the Valley, the Chanter, was critically injured too. His fellow urRu patched up his wounds and got him to his bed.

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Byron soon came back. There was still no change in the unconscious creature.

Wyneth gave Byron some dinner for the night and she let him take over watch duty.

During the night, Chamberlain whimpered in his sleep. He began mumbling. He was dreaming about the horrific treatment he had gotten from his own kind earlier in the day. But then, he saw his lover, La. It was like she was reaching out to him. But he couldn't reach her. He called out to her.

The Gelflings could see that this creature could talk, but asking what his name was would have to wait till he came to. His talking in his sleep had clearly been from being traumatized. And maybe from a fever too.

Wyneth came back and she felt Sil's body. He was really warm, but the blanket needed to stay on. She got a cloth wet with water and began wiping his face and neck down gently. But the fever persisted.

"What's wrong?" Byron asked. He saw the healer had a worried look on her face.

"Rakkidas have a certain toxin in their saliva. His body is obviously trying real hard to fight the toxin. He'll be lucky he survives with the loss of blood he had." She explained.

Byron really hoped this creature would survive. He was anxious to learn more about it.

4. Chapter 4

Chamberlain was unconscious and fighting the fever for three days straight.

Wyneth kept an eye on him. Byron would go tend to his Mounders during the day, but would return in the evening. He wanted to be there to see his creature wake up.

Chamberlain soon came to. At first, his vision was blurry. He felt he was lying on his left side and partially on his back. He also felt some soft material beneath him.

When his vision focused, he saw he was in an unfamiliar place. It definitely did not look like the castle.

"Where am I?" He asked weakly.

Wyneth heard the question. She went over to the cage. He was facing toward the cage.

"You are in my healer's sanctuary." Wyneth answered him.

Sil heard a female voice answer him. He moaned and moved his head to where he heard it. There, on the other side of some bars, was a mid-aged female Gelfling.

When he saw the bars and a Gelfling, he felt panic rising. For the first time, he was the prisoner!

Chamberlain tried to instantly get up, scared of what may happen to him among Gelflings.

"Agh!" He instantly cried out as he felt pain in his body. He had no choice but to stop moving. He clutched his ribs when it had made a cracking sound. Then he saw his arms no longer had the sleeves from his robes on.

He looked at his arms and saw white cloth wrapped around them instead. His right arm was wrapped from his wrist to his shoulder. Just his left hand and wrist was wrapped. Then he felt the tight feel on his ribs and on his left leg too.

Sil couldn't believe this had happened to him. He remembered being banished, now he had been practically near death.

"For right now, Creature, it is best you don't move around much. You were hurt pretty bad." Wyneth said.

"What happened?" He asked nervously. "Where am I?"

"Byron said that Rakkida were trying to make a meal of you." She said. "He and his Mounders brought you here three days ago. I treated your wounds. We were wondering if you were ever going to wake up."

Three days? It couldn't be. Then Sil was sure of something else: a dryness had settled in his mouth. He licked his mouth, trying to

stimulate saliva.

"Want some water?" Wyneth asked.

Sil whimpered. "Yes."

The Gelfling woman picked up a bottled wineskin and brought it to Sil's mouth through the bars.

He wasn't accustomed to feeling like this, but his own arms were in no shape to hold anything. He raised his head and she tilted it up for him.

The cold liquid felt like heaven in his dry mouth. He even tried to make sure he didn't let one drop spill by licking at his mouth and the wineskin.

Then she pulled it away. "That's enough for now. We'll try food later on."

"Why am I in a cage?" He asked.

"It was just a precaution. We didn't know if you were going to be a killer creature or not. What are you anyway?" She asked.

"I am Skeksis." Sil replied.

Wyneth was shocked at that. "Don't the Skeksis live in the castle of the Crystal?"

"Yes but I was banished."

"Oh. Sorry to hear that. So, what's your name then?"

Chamberlain whimpered in pain. He tried to move his left leg and found it hurt to move too. Then he answered her.

"Sil. SkekSil, but other Skeksis call me Chamberlain, my title."

"Well, Chamberlain SkekSil, you are going to be staying here until you are well enough to move about. You could tear those injuries if you move about in a struggling manner. And Byron's going to be back tonight. He'll be glad you're awake."

Sil knew he was going to be meeting another Gelfling. Perhaps the one in charge? He better release him or else. Skeksis were superior over Gelflings.

Chamberlain didn't know what else to say right now. He was in a lot of pain and he laid his head back down. He whimper moaned.

"I know you've got to be in pain. I am a healer. I can give you some herbs to control pain." Wyneth said.

At that, Sil raised his head again. "Please let me have" He said weakly.

To her, saying please was polite enough. She picked up some plant and berry materials. She brought it over to him.

"They may not taste the best, but if you want the relief, you need to eat them all."

Sil just wanted the pain to go away. He could move his left arm more freely without much pain. He took them from her and ate the herbs. Yep, she was right. They didn't taste the best, but he managed to get them down, and with some more water.

"Now you should rest. I'll give you some food when you awaken." Wyneth said.

"Thanks." He said and he felt the effects. These herbs could make him drowsy too. He laid his head down and fell back to sleep.

Now that she had seen him awake and talked to him, Wyneth knew that they had to be weary. It would be hard to tell what this Skeksis would be capable of, especially when his injuries healed.

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Back at the castle, it had been three days since Chamberlain had been banished and been forced out. Everyone was enjoying themselves, all but SkekLa. She missed SkekSil. He was her closest friend. Now she practically had no one to turn too if she was mistreated. She hoped he would come back for her.

The Collector was glad Sil was gone too so the Emperor wouldn't find out he was keeping Gelfling essence for himself.

Ung was glad to be rid of him so he wouldn't have to put up with Sil's whimpering voice, though all the others were glad not to hear his voice or his blackmailing.

In the Emperor's eyes, Chamberlain had just been a sore loser and he had been getting constantly on his nerves lately. He knew Sil was constantly trying to seek his attention, but Sil just didn't have the right qualities he was looking for to favor like Lach had, or Ung.

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Wyneth awoke Chamberlain from his sleep in the early evening. He was still drowsy from the herbs. "What?" He moaned.

"It's been a few days since you've had a meal, and I said that when you woke up next that you could have some food." She said.

Sil knew she was right. He had been hungry when he left the castle and hadn't had anything since. Right now, he would be willing to eat anything.

Wyneth laid of a plate of some food down in front of him. "This food should be gentle for you to eat. I mean, going without food for a prolonged time can make the stomach rather sensitive."

Remaining on his side, using his left hand, he managed to pick up the food in pieces and bring them to his mouth. It tasted good on his tongue. He had eaten Gelfling food before. They did have good food.

Wyneth also gave him a wineskin again with fresh water in it.

Chamberlain drank from the wineskin only after he was done eating. From what he had been given felt more like a small meal, but after not eating for a few days, it was wise to start out with small meals.

After the meal, that was when Byron came into the room.

"Hello Byron, your rescued friend is awake." Wyneth said.

Byron could see the creature was awake and was looking at him, but he hadn't moved much from where he had been laid on the bedding. He walked over to the cage.

"Hello. I had my Mounders save you from those Rakkidas. They nearly killed you." Byron said. "My name is Byron."

"They just attacked me." Sil said.

"So, what are you? I've never seen anything like you before. And what's your name?" Byron asked.

"You've never heard of Skeksis? I am Skeksis. I am called SkekSil or Chamberlain."

"The word sounds a little familiar from surrounding villages, but mine has been private. We never conversed with the Skeksis before. We just had our own way of life." Byron said. "And I am just a farm boy who likes to be with the Mounders. I'm more of a loner, so that job was bestowed on me from my people. But why were you out there in the field?"

Am outcast." Sil said, looking down at his more severely wounded arm.

"Why did they banish you?" Byron asked.

"Trouble with SkekLach. I lost fight with him. And he was stealing from our Emperor. Emperor not listen to me and had me forced out." Sil explained. But he had made sure not to mention what the Collector had been stealing.

Chamberlain knew that in his vulnerable state at the moment, even small Gelflings could harm him.

"We're sorry to hear that, Chamberlain." Wyneth then spoke up. "But it's been long enough for those bandages. It's time to change them."

Sil looked at the supplies in her hands. She came to the cage and unlocked it. He watched her.

"I need to see how your injuries are. Will you let me?" She asked.

"Yes." He let out a big sigh.

Wyneth started with Sil's more severe arm. He watched as she gently took the bandages off his arm and when they were all off, he saw his blood had stained much of the bandages. She gave him a moment to look at the wounds that covered the arm.

Sil saw there were cuts everywhere from his wrist to his upper arm. There were stitches in at least three places.

"Can you move your arm okay, to make sure it's not broken?" She instructed.

Chamberlain lifted his arm and moved it. He could move it, but the wounds just throbbed painfully.

He whined in pain, then put his other hand to it.

"What's wrong?" Byron asked.

"Hurts!"

"That's going to be normal for now. It should feel better in a few days. Now I need to put some fresh bandages on the wounds." Wyneth said.

She picked up new bandages and then she picked up the bottle that was with her. She applied some of the liquid in it to the bandages. "This could sting a little, but this is medicine to help the wounds heal faster." She said.

Sil was worried when he heard that.

Wyneth had some guaze pads made and applied them to two spots on his arm. The instant the medicine made contact with the wounds, it STUNG big time!

"AGH!" Sil screamed. He jerked his arm away to his chest, which caused his ribs to crack again, making him wince.

"I know it hurts, but this medicine needs to be applied. I'll give you some more pain relief, but Chamberlain, you must let me treat your wounds." Wyneth said. "I don't mean to hurt you. Please." She had her hand out for his wounded arm.

He clutched his arm, but knew he couldn't take care of this by himself. He reluctantly let go of his arm and gave it back to her. The pads had fallen off and she reapplied them. The wounds throbbed again, but this time, Sil bared his teeth and clenched his stomach, trying not to scream.

Once the pads were in place, Wyneth began bandaging over them. The wounds were too severe to be left out to the air.

When the new bandages were in place and done with, Chamberlain could feel the throbbing beneath them. Then the female Gelfling turned her attention to his left hand.

When those ones were off, Sil could see there were some awful scratch marks on his hand. They didn't have stitches, but looked just as awful. The medicine was applied on a pad too and stung just as much as before, then the wounds were bound up again.

Chamberlain couldn't help it as the pain made tears come to his eyes. He would much rather have La treating his wounds. He knew she would be making a big fuss over him and giving him the attention he deserved.

Next came the leg wound. Sil was still lying on it. He hadn't moved off it.

"I need to examine your leg now." Wyneth said. She pulled the blanket up on the legs.

Sil pulled his tail in close to him and bent his right knee.

"Can you move over?"

He gradually moved himself onto his back. He raised himself on his left elbow to see what she was doing.

Wyneth took the bandages off his thigh and leg.

Chamberlain saw stitches in his leg too. Those monsters had torn him up big time.

"All your wounds look better than when you were first brought in, though yes, they still look sore." Wyneth said.

"The field was just covered in blood where the attack took place." Byron said. "You had lost a lot of blood, but I wasn't about to turn you away. Every creature deserves a chance to live."

Chamberlain was grateful to hear that. Then he felt his leg getting rewrapped. He wouldn't be walking for a few more days.

Then the final check was the ribs. Chamberlain clutched at his middle. That area felt more private.

"I just need to check if they are doing alright." Wyneth said.

Hesitantly, he let the Gelfling healer look at his lower ribs. He saw his lower chest and upper stomach were bandaged. Wyneth touched his ribs and it instantly had him cringing.

"Ribs are fine!" He put his right arm over them.

"I heard a cracking from them. Aside from just keeping them compressed, there's not much I can do for hurt ribs. They'll heal on their own in time. Those bandages don't have to be changed today."

Sil was relieved. He had had enough pain.

"Well, we should head to bed now, Byron. Chamberlain is doing just fine." Wyneth said. She left the cage with the old bandages and the bottle in tow. Then she began preparing the herbs again for Sil.

"Where are my clothes?" Sil asked. He had looked under the blanket.

"They were all torn up beyond repair. We had to destroy them, but we can get you some new ones. For now, you can have the blanket." Byron said.

"When giving you fresh clothes, you need to be able to move about first. Maybe you should wait a few days for the wounds to be more better first." Wyneth said.

Chamberlain could live with that. He was given the herbs and was asleep again in no time.

**I know Sil would be in pain, but I would figure if he found out that these Gelflings had saved him, he might show some more gratitude. **

**Beta read by SkekLa. **

5. Chapter 5

The next day, Byron went to his village's clothes maker and asked if she would make some special clothes for a new person.

"It depends, Byron. I have to see them first." She said.

Byron gladly led her to the healer's sanctuary.

"Why are we here?" She asked.

"Because Kalta, he's in there." Byron said.

Kalta looked to the cage where he pointed and she saw a real different kind of creature.

"Whatâ€¦| what is that?" She asked in a scared tone.

"He's a Skeksis. Harmless. He's injured, but he needs some new clothes. Please, Kalta." Byron said.

Chamberlain watched and listened to their fuss over him. He saw the reluctant Gelfling come closer to his cage.

"Chamberlain, she needs some measurements in order to make the clothes." Byron said.

Kalta was nervous as she brought out her measuring device.

"Just don't touch my wounds." Sil said and he let her start her measurements.

He sat up for her to measure his middle. Everything else was easy.

"Any color you prefer?" Kalta asked.

"Red, black." Sil answered.

"I'll see what I can do." She said, then left with the measurements.

"She didn't seem too comfortable around you." Byron said.

Chamberlain didn't like the concept of that. But he needed clothes and was wanting them bad.

"She should have them nearly done by the time your wounds are healed." Wyneth said.

Sil was glad to hear it.

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When Kalta got back to her shop, she couldn't believe she would be making clothes for that hideous creature. And she had seen he was terribly wounded. If the village banded together, maybe they could get him out of here.

A couple days into her making of Sil's clothing, another Gelfling from the village came into her shop to ask for a new shirt made. His name was Suth.

Suth was the like the security leader of the village. He had brownish hair and brown eyes.

"Hello, Kalta, I am in need of a new shirt. You think you can have it ready in a few days?" Suth asked.

"I'll squeeze in what I can. These clothes are much bigger and I need to get them done first." Kalta replied.

Suth saw what she was making and it looked nothing like Gelfling garments.

"Just who are you making those for?" Suth asked.

"Wyneth has an unusual creature in her healer's sanctuary. He's requesting clothing." She said.

"And just what is this creature?"

"A Skeksis."

Suth's eyes widened at that. He had heard of them before. He had many friends that had gone to serve the Skeksis in their castle and they had never returned. He worried that there was trouble for them all with one of their kind around.

"I must see this for myself. But just keep my order here." Suth said and left the shop.

He marched straight for Wyneth's sanctuary. He knocked on her door. She answered.

"Hi, Suth. What can I do for you?" Wyneth greeted.

"I heard that you had a Skeksis here. Is it true?" Suth demanded.

"Yes. He's wounded, and that's why he's here." She said.

"I need to see him."

"Very well. This way." Wyneth said and she let him in. She led him to Sil's cage.

Chamberlain was sound asleep at the moment, dreaming of his lover back home.

Suth saw the big grayish creature lying in the cage with a blanket over him. He saw Sil's right arm out in front of him. It was covered in bandages.

"Two Rakkidas nearly killed him." Wyneth said. "He's not well enough to go anywhere."

"Just keep an eye on him. I've lost many friends to those creatures that went to serve in the castle before I came here." Suth said.

"Yes, Sir." She replied.

Suth looked Sil up and down again before he left, to make sure the creature wasn't just pulling a trick.

Wyneth knew this might spell trouble. Chamberlain's life might be in the balance if he was seen as dangerous by their chief security officer. But she too had been wary of the Skeksis too from the moment he came, despite his injuries.

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Chamberlain still had some healing ahead of him, but after 9 days in her care, Wyneth and Byron encouraged Sil that he needed to get up and move.

He did want to be able to get up and move again. He managed to push himself to a sitting position first, and he took his right hand and took hold of the cage bars, and getting his legs ready, pulled himself to his feet. He moaned as he got up. His left hand held his ribs.

The moment he was on his feet, Sil felt pain in his arm, ribs, and the wounded leg. He whimpered in pain. He held his leg up with his severely wounded arm on the bars.

"You need to use your leg. Just walk slowly so you don't tear the stitches in it." Wyneth said.

Chamberlain put his leg down and slowly proceeded to let go of the bars.

"I'm going to let you out for the first time so you can have room to move around. You promise you won't try to run off?"

"How can I run? I hurt too much. Ribs hurt and hard to breathe sometimes and can hardly walk right now." Sil said.

He now limped toward the cage door as Wyneth unlocked it. The

bandages had the drawback feeling of walking. It hurt to walk, and he was a little unsteady since he hadn't walked in many days.

Sil was glad to be up on his feet again though. It was just another step in his recovery.

But then, Suth came into the room again, and he saw the Skeksis up on his feet.

Chamberlain didn't recognize this Gelfling. He knew that Byron was taking care of the Mounders for the day.

"So, he's up and walking now, is he, Wyneth?"

"Yes, Suth. He needs to start his walking again. He's been in my care for many days. He's well enough for it." She replied.

Suth then approached Sil. "You better not have plans to try to harm my people, Skeksis, or there could be trouble for you. And you may be taller than me, but in your condition, I could easily cause trouble for you."

"Not I. I am friend. Am outcast. I am friend to Gelflings. And need place to stay." Sil said.

"Keep it that way, on friendly terms or else. We might be able to see about a place to stay, when you're well, but for now, you are staying here with Wyneth." Suth said. "In time, we will have to inform the village that you're here."

Chamberlain knew the other Gelflings would need to know that he was here if he were to stay here, if at the least, temporarily. He would stay at the least until he was healed. But it might depend on what treatment they gave him for if he would decide to stay with them. He really had no other place to go outside the castle.

"But why are you here, Suth?" Wyneth asked.

"I just wanted to see how he was doing, as he was asleep the last time I saw him." Suth said. And of course, with Sil standing now, he could see the full extent to what had happened to the creature. "So, what is your name?"

"Chamberlain, SkekSil."

"Well, Chamberlain SkekSil, just remember what I said. We like to keep peace around here. Those that cause trouble get punished." Suth said and left.

"What's his problem?" Sil asked.

"He's our protector and investigator. He's just looking out for the village's safety, that's all." Wyneth said.

But as Chamberlain had glared after him, he seemed to get a bad vibe off that Gelfling, that he might be an enemy. If he was well, he could handle him, but not like this. But Sil had gone through so much trouble already to get here and was aiming to not cause trouble.

****Beta read with SkekLa. ****

6. Chapter 6

Some few days later, Kalta brought the newly designed clothes to Wyneth's home for Chamberlain to try on and see if anything needed improvements. She had done as much as she could. The colors that Sil had desired weren't colors that were worn in her village, so it had been a first for her.

The clothing was very light layered.

Chamberlain was glad to see the clothes had been made. He was ready to be dressed in robes again, but when he saw it, though he loved the colors, the layers reminded him of light layers he had worn long ago. Maybe it wasn't as good as what Ekt would make for him, but for now, he had to settle for this.

He had some help getting the clothing on because of his injured hand and arm.

A one layer of robe that had an added cape on the back of it. The cape was black. His main clothing on his body was red. Kalta had left the shirt part mostly sleeveless, as she was seeing his wounded arm.

Chamberlain wished the clothes were a little more like the robes he had back home, but for now, he would stick with these. It was better than nothing.

When she was sure her customer was satisfied, she also gave him a belt to help keep the middle part from being too loose.

"Thank you, Kalta. I will keep the belt for now. I don't think he's ready to wear it yet. The ribs might protest it." Wyneth said.

"That's ok. Whenever he's ready for it." Kalta said. Then she left to go do other clothing orders and repairs.

But as she left, Kalta somehow felt like the Skeksis had been a little disappointed with her work. Well, wherever he was from, she wasn't going to be like the clothes maker from his home. She might be able to make additions later, but at least she had given him something to start with.

Once Sil had all his clothing needs met for right now, Wyneth had another look at his wounds and saw they were doing really well. It had been two weeks now since he was rescued.

"Tomorrow, Chamberlain, I will remove the stitches in your arm and leg. The wounds look healed. For the rest of the day, you can finally go bandage free." Wyneth said.

Sil smiled. He was tired of the bandages. All of his wounds were pretty healed, but his ribs still had a ways to go.

The next day, before Byron went to go tend to the Mounders, he was watching as Wyneth was removing the stitches from the Chamberlain's

arm and leg. His left hand was still healing a bit and was doing well.

Chamberlain watched curiously and warily at the same time how the small Gelfling woman was handling his wounds. She would cut a stitch, and then she would gently pull it out. It didn't really hurt at all, but he could feel the pulling.

Once all the stitches were out, the spots where the stitches had been were noticeable, but at least the worst of the wounds were closed. There would be ugly scars, but it was worth it to be alive and well.

"Thanks for taking them out. They were not nice in my skin." Sil said.

"You're welcome. Yes, they can pull at the skin, but it's so worth it to get horrendous wounds closed and you had some of those kinds." Wyneth said.

"So, what do we do now that his injuries are better?" Byron asked.

"Yes, that is a good question. What are you going to do around here? I know your ribs are still injured, but you could still do some light weight work." Wyneth said.

Chamberlain was not accustomed to doing the kind of work that Gelflings did. But he had to find a new way to live his life. Starting here was a good start. He was after all, grateful to these two Gelflings for saving his life. He owed them that.

After that, Byron went to see to the Mounders' attention for the day. Sil was wondering what he was going to do.

Chamberlain was no longer kept in the cage. He was sleeping on a bed that had been made for him in Wyneth's home. He had proven himself enough that he wasn't up to anything.

"Excuse me, Chamberlain, but I need to go to the village market and get some more herbs and food." Wyneth said.

"Yes, of course. What do I do?" Sil asked.

"You can do what you want, just don't make a mess." Wyneth said. She had a basket in her arms. "I'll be back soon." She went out the door.

Back home, Sil knew what he could be doing, but here, he didn't know of much to do at all. He hadn't done much of anything in the past two weeks but recover. He felt bored and restless. He missed La and her affections for him.

He tried to make a decision, whether he would lay down or go outside and walk around. He decided to go out and walk around. He was tired of being inside. He wanted to keep his leg in shape too.

It was a bright, sunny day out. Ever since he had gotten here, he hadn't gone outside much, at the risk of fearing he would tear his stitches. But now that they were out, he just wanted out of the

house.

He went out exploring around the house to see what the Gelfling healer had around her home. He saw she had gardens of fruits and vegetables and herbs.

As long as he had been here, he had mainly been eating nothing but fruits and veggies. He was ready for some meat again. He had had breakfast that morning, but already, he was desiring some more food.

He heard some movement and saw a good sized rodent looking creature. He didn't know what it was, but he was hungry enough for it. It sat there, grooming itself, not noticing him.

Sil had to take the chance. He approached slowly, trying not to make a sound.

He got up to just behind it and it still hadn't moved. With careful precision, he grabbed it up real fast.

It began crying out. Sil kept his hold on it. He knew he had to silence its cries real quick.

He saw a tree and he quickly put an end to the creature's struggles.

Sil was capable of eating food raw, but instead, he took it inside and, using a knife of Wyneth's, he skinned it and gutted it, then made a meal of it. It wasn't pretty, but Sil had finally gotten some much needed meat.

â€|.

Wyneth went to the market in her village for the herbs and food she was needing. While she was getting the things she needed, Suth happened to see her there.

"Hello, Wyneth." He said.

"Hello, Suth. What's going on?" She asked.

"How's that Skeksis friend of yours?" Suth asked.

"He's much better. Most of the injures are healed now, all but his ribs."

"Well, now that he's capable of walking about on his own, I thought it was about time he was introduced to the town. As you well know, anyone who stays here must be known about." Suth said.

"I know. Yes, I think that can be arranged. He needs more ways to be useful around here. He's restless, I can see it." Wyneth said.

"Have him brought to the Counsel House tonight. He'll be introduced to the Gelfling clan." Suth said.

"What if he doesn't come?"

"The clan will be told of his existence anyway. Then most likely,

they will come to see you anyway to see who he is. But the best way to end the suspicion is to convince him to come to the meeting."

"I'm sure he will. He wants stuff to do now that he's well." She said.

"Good. I'm sure the clan can come up with things for him to help around the village in the daytime." Suth said.

"Just remember he still has injured ribs, so it should be light work only." Wyneth warned.

"Yes, yes. We'll worry about that later. But just get what you need and prepare him for tonight."

"Byron needs to be there too, to tell what he saw when he found Chamberlain." Wyneth said.

"True. Yes, that's why it's later tonight." Suth said.

Then the Gelflings parted and Wyneth got what she needed as she headed home.

Suth still had some doubts about the Skeksis, but he was going to see that he proved himself useful around here.

â€¦

When Wyneth got home, she saw there was somewhat of a bloody mess on her counter.

She dropped her basket in shock. "Chamberlain!"

He was awoken from her shout. "What?!"

"What did you do?!" She demanded.

"Iâ€¦ uh, caught an animal. I needed some meat." Sil said.

"You sure created one big mess in my kitchen. You need to clean that up." She said. "If you were still hungry, I could have gotten you something."

"I needed meat. And I didn't see anything that could meet that need in here." He said.

"We'll worry about it later, but there's also something we need to talk about after you've cleaned up your mess. Now go on."

He wasn't used to being ordered around like this by a Gelfling, but it was her home. He reluctantly cleaned up the mess he had made, then he went to his bed area, where she was waiting for him.

He sat down. "What to talk about?" He asked.

"While I was at the market, I saw Suth. He had asked about you and I said how you are well again. He insisted on a clan meeting tonight, about you. To let the clan know of your existence here. Anyone who resides here must be known about, and the clan could find jobs for

you to do around the village so you aren't so bored. If you don't go, everyone will be coming to you, so it's better if you come with Byron and me to the meeting. And be on your best behavior." Wyneth explained.

"Hmmm. I always am." He said.

"That animal you killed was not what I call best behavior."

"I can handle what you give me, all the plant food, but I still do need meat in my diet. Sorry about mess, Wyneth." Chamberlain said.

"Okay. But if you must catch your own meals, then we must also find you a place of your own. I don't like bloody meal messes in my home. I'll take the injury messes instead. But, for now, rest up. We are going to the meeting after Byron gets back tonight." She said.

Sil was up for this meeting. He was ready to do other things besides just sit around doing nothing all day. He laid down and went to sleep for now.

Wyneth went back to her basket and picked up the mess she had made and put the supplies where they needed to be. She would tell Byron about the meeting when he came back in the evening.

â€|

It had been well over 3 weeks now since Chamberlain had been banished. The Skeksis clan was enjoying their time well without him. All but the Illustrator. She hoped her love was okay out there in the wilderness. She missed having him to talk to and cuddle with on the special times they could be together.

The Emperor was now ordering to up the Garthim attacks on outside Gelfling villages and cities. SkekUng would sometimes go with them and other times he didn't. He usually went to the Gelfling villages, but when the Garthim were only sent out for food, then he didn't go.

The Collector's actions had also gotten stronger in the Emperor's eyes of his strategies to capture more Gelflings for their essences.

To SkekLa, it was disgusting in her eyes how the Emperor favored the big liar.

7. Chapter 7

When Byron came back that evening, he was told of the meeting and usually, he wasn't much for being around his fellow Gelflings that much, but he knew he would have to go. His village would need to be informed of how SkekSil came to be here.

Chamberlain watched as Byron got himself cleaned up to go to the meeting. Wyneth had prepared herself long ago after cleaning up her own mess from dropping her supply basket.

When they were ready, all three of them left Wyneth's house and Sil

followed the two Gelflings to what they called the Counsel or Meeting House. Sil was almost surprised the door to it was big enough for him to pass through it, since he was much bigger than the Gelflings.

Byron and Wyneth went in first. Sil was right behind them, but he had to have a look first what was going on inside. He saw lots of Gelflings walking around and talking.

Byron and Wyneth turned when they saw Sil wasn't with them. He was still at the door. Byron went back to him. "What's wrong?"

"Haven't been around this many Gelflings for awhile all at once." Sil replied.

"It's going to be fine."

"I stay out here till I'm announced." He said.

"Alright, but stay here at the entrance." Byron said.

Wyneth went up to Suth. "We're here."

"Where's the Skeksis?" Suth asked.

Wyneth pointed to the door. Suth saw Byron talking to the Skeksis. "I think he's nervous about coming in." Wyneth said.

"Understandable perhaps. But let's get on with this then." Suth said. He was standing at a podium.

Suth began hitting a gavel on the podium that got everyone's attention. "Everyone, let's get this meeting started. Please sit down."

The other Gelflings sat down. Byron stayed by the door. Sil was still looking in.

"We are here tonight to talk of a new arrival in our village. He's not of our kind, but I was wanting to inform all of you that he is here. And whether he is to stay." Suth began.

There were some whispers. Then a young female Gelfling spoke up. "Then let's bring him forward." She said.

"Very well, Queen Athya. Byron, if you would bring your friend inside." Suth said.

Chamberlain heard the word queen and knew these Gelflings were led by a female. Then Byron said, "Come on in, Chamberlain. You have been announced."

Sil was a little nervous doing this. He followed Byron inside finally. He watched the clan's reactions.

The Gelflings gasped at the sight of him. To them, he did look a bit scary, even dangerous looking a bit, but Chamberlain was looking as calm as he possibly could.

Sil saw many hair colors on the Gelflings and could make out little

children too. He guessed the whole clan was here, or nearly all of them. Then, the queen got his attention.

"Byron, I was told that it was you discovered this strange creature. What's his story?" Queen Athya asked.

"I was just doing my job that day: letting the Mounders do what they do in the fields and then I heard some screaming. I had myself and the Mounders check out what was causing the noise and when we got there, I saw two Rakkidas attacking him. After the Mounders got rid of the Rakkidas, I found him nearly dead. I had the Mounders take him to Wyneth's, and we had been taking care of him since. He was hurt really bad." Byron explained.

"He had wounds on his arms and one leg and some broken ribs. The ribs are still healing, but the worst of the wounds are healed. I assure you, he hasn't done anything to harm us. He was banished from the Skeksis clan. He has nowhere else to go. Please, consider letting him stay with us. I've come to enjoy his company very much myself." Byron finished.

Chamberlain was surprised that Byron had said that. A Gelfling that enjoyed his company? He had never imagined.

"Soâ€|" A voice snapped him out of his thoughts. It was the queen. "What is your name, Skeksis?"

"SkekSil, Chamberlain."

"Why were you banished?"

Sil knew he couldn't give away the full answer, if he was going to stay. "Iâ€| lost a fight. My Emperor wouldn't listen to me about another Skeksis causing trouble for him. He favored that one over me. I kept trying to tell him to listen, but he wouldn't and had enough and had me forced out." He explained simply. "Then I run into Rakkidas and what Byron said from there."

"Sounds like you've just had a hard life." She said.

"Yes. Am friend to Gelflings. Please not send me away. Grown used to it here." Sil said.

"Well, Chamberlain, you are going to have to prove yourself to us. I can arrange for you to do some chores around the village with the others here. We always have lots to do. What did you do before?" Athya asked.

Sil proceeded to tell some of his jobs that he did back at the castle. But he never revealed how the Gelflings were treated among other things.

"Well, we can also let you have your own place to live, but first, you must earn it. Getting your own home is the best reward for earning your keep here." Athya said.

"When I begin?" Sil asked.

"Tomorrow. Report to my house and I will give you instructions on what you can do. Byron or Wyneth can accompany you." The queen said.

"We are adjourned for tonight."

The crowd began to get up and disperse. Many still held many doubts about this strange creature.

"At least you get to start doing things tomorrow." Byron said.

"Thatâ€¦ was nice of you to say what you said about meâ€¦ enjoying my company." Sil said.

"Well, you have been. You are different than what I've lived with all my life and I just don't like being around other Gelflings constantly. I've been looking forward to something different in my life. The Mounders were as good as it got without leaving for some adventure. Then you came and it has been an adventure getting to know you." Byron said.

"He has that right, Chamberlain." Wyneth came up to them. "You are exotic to us. But the clan getting used to seeing you is something else. You will have to work hard to show them that you can be trusted. Not everyone here is so trusting. It took me awhile to get used to you. But of course, now that you are well, I also need to see your full potential. At least our people are willing to give you a chance. Don't blow it."

The three of them headed out after the others were all gone. Though Suth was still there, talking to the queen.

"Just keep an eye on him, Suth. Until he proves fully trustworthy, I can't help but be a little wary of him." Athya said.

"Yes, my queen. I know what you mean. Even Kalta was worried. She recently had to make some clothes for him. You saw what colors he was wearing." Suth said.

"Yes. Not often we see clothes of those colors." She said.

"I will keep an eye on him as he begins his duties." Suth said and then he went home for the night, as did the queen.

â€¦..

Chamberlain went to bed that night wondering what he was going to be put to chores on the next day. He hoped it wasn't something too hard, or too heavy, as his ribs couldn't handle that kind of thing at the moment.

Byron's main duty was the Mounders everyday, so he had to go to the Mounders. Wyneth went with Sil the next day to the queen's home to get his instruction duties.

Sil saw that the queen's home was bigger than all of the others in the village. These Gelflings were obviously of the woodlands. This had been the first time of him seeing the village in the daylight.

All Gelfling outside that saw him on the way to the queen's home would stop and stare. It made Sil a bit uneasy just as they obviously

were.

When they got to the queen's home, they both made their way to the throne. Wyneth bowed right away. "We are here, your Majesty." She greeted.

Sil saw what she did and he looked at Queen Athya. She was obviously watching him for it. Just as a sign of respect for a leader, he did a bow too, but not too low, as his ribs gave a little cracking, making him grab the injury.

"I see your ribs are still a problem." Athya said.

"A little, yes." Sil replied.

"Maybe he shouldn't be working until they've healed some more." Wyneth said.

"He can handle light duties." Athya said. "Hence, with the name Chamberlain as your title, tells me your rank must have been a high ranking one?"

"Title says yes, but Emperor stripped me of it."

"So what did you do for him as Court Chamberlain though?"

"Did a lot of delivering scrolls and books between the Emperor and the Historian. And I was also a lot of a listener around the castle for certain secrets. And watched others for signs of trouble." Sil said simply. "Made sure state affairs were in order."

"Well, you can do state of affairs for me if you wish. But do you know Gelfling writing?"

"Have learned it, yes."

"I give the orders, you write them, and send them to the certain individuals in the village when needed, but sometimes, you might also be needed in the village too with maybe some bigger tasks that require more strength. But for now, with your remaining injury, we will keep that limited. Wyneth, how long as it been since the injuries happened?" Athya asked.

"Over 23 days ago, my queen. It can take up to at least 42 to over 60 days for the worst of broken bones to mend. A little ways to go yet." Wyneth said.

"I'm not the strongest Skeksis. The fight I was in that I lost to get me banished was a trial of being able to hold a lot of weight and I couldn't do it. I'm not that strong." Sil said.

"Well, I meant more from a size difference between us and you. You are much bigger and should be able to handle some stronger jobs than what we can. I guarantee they aren't like lifting heavy rocks. Just helping the farmers in the fields and delivering items at times. And your bringing the villagers' concerns and things to me. Any of the clan might request your help from time to time." Athya explained.

"I can deliver the messages fine. But I don't know all who is who in your village." Sil said.

"You will in time. Until then, I will have my son, Lyrin, show you around to where you need to go at those times." Athya said. "And for delivering the messages of scrolls and papers, there is a carrier bag to make it easier in your office. The rules are simple for your job: come in the morning and you go home in the evening."

"What about his meals?" Wyneth asked.

"There will be fine meals served here at the right times of day. Don't worry. I have heard that three women in the village are expecting babies soon, am I right, Wyneth?" Athya asked.

"Yes. I do need to be attending to them to make sure everything is alright. They are nearing term." Wyneth confirmed.

"So, what now?" Sil asked.

"I will be on my way, and Athya will take care of you for now, Chamberlain. I have my duties to get to as well. Have fun." Wyneth said.

"Yes, you are dismissed, Wyneth. I will help Chamberlain out as much as I can." Athya said.

Wyneth walked out, leaving Sil standing there in front of the queen.

Athya then turned to the Skeksis. "I'll show you to your special office now." She said. "This way." She hand gestured.

Sil followed her. His formerly injured leg could be walked on without a limp. He hoped the Gelfling wasn't planning anything stupid on him. He was fully capable of turning on the Gelflings now if they betrayed him. But to his amazement, he was led to a well lit big room that was a library.

It had fine designs and tapestries on the walls, a desk in the middle of the room for writing on, and many books and scrolls on the shelves.

"You can make yourself at home here. Study what you want and when I need you, I'll send for you." Athya said. "And for the empty parchments for taking notes on, those are over there to the far left." Sil saw them on the far left wall.

"Okay." Sil said.

"I'll leave you to it, and if you need assistance, feel free to ask." She said, and left him alone to get acquainted with his new environment.

Chamberlain wasn't sure where to begin. He walked over to the desk first to check it out.

It was a fine desk. It had drawers to hold scrolls and items. It had writing materials ready, and a good sized seat for him to sit on. It looked nice to him. Then he went over to examine the scrolls to see what they read. He had to keep himself busy.

There had to be much he could learn from this job. And so began his new job.

****Beta read by SkekLa. ****

****Love seeing those lovely reviews. ****

8. Chapter 8

Over the next few months, Chamberlain did his job well. He took the queen's orders and concerns from the villagers back to her. Prince Lyrin had showed him around and even made friends with him.

Sil found out that Lyrin's father had been killed in Rakkida attacks. He felt that part, remembering his ordeal alone. He also had four younger siblings that were too young to have jobs at all other than just have fun and learn things about what their society was about.

At first, Sil's duties had been more confined to the delivery of messages. But after his ribs had healed a couple of months later, Athya did start giving him some jobs that were done involving some farming like jobs. He even got to go on a day job with Byron one time too and he got to see what Byron did all day in the fields with the Mounders, which didn't seem like much to him. But they did bring in crops from the fields too for food preparation in the evenings.

At one time, Sil was seeking out Wyneth for concerns for Athya of the coming babies in the village, and he happened to find her at one of the homes when the mother was actually in labor too. The screaming was a bit too much for him to handle and Wyneth told him to leave immediately, as this was a bad time. He did leave.

Chamberlain had adapted well to his new home and job, but there were still things that he did miss from, like his mate. He often thought of La and dreamt about her. He wished he could see her again.

Byron no longer went to Wyneth's home. Sil had moved out of her home and into his home after her outburst at him that time he had bad timing at the home where the mom was having her child that day.

Byron showed Sil more of the job of taking care of himself when it came to mealtimes. How to prepare certain foods, and if there required the killing of an animal for meat, Byron showed him how to catch it with netting materials, how to stay upwind or downwind of it and being quiet. He learned much from Byron.

Sil mostly only ate meat in the evening, as when he was in Queen Athya's home during the day, he was given mostly fruit and vegetables, as that was the most of the Gelfling diet.

On two other separate occasions, Sil was just doing his job of delivering messages, and with those times, he also met the two other expectant mothers to be. One was nearly at term, while the other one was mid-term. The mates of the pregnant females took care of the affairs with Sil while the males made sure their pregnant mates kept their distance from the Skeksis messenger. They still weren't so trusting of him even though he had been with them for a little while

now.

Chamberlain wondered what it would truly take for the Gelflings to fully trust him. But when he looked at the Gelfling mates together made him long for his own that got left behind.

And from the outside, other Gelfling villages were being attacked by the Garthim viciously. The one where Sil was had been unnoticed for a long time.

â€¦

Sil had now been with the Gelflings for over 4 and half months. He had been doing his job well, but some things had been disturbing him of late, other than missing his mate.

He had begun to have trouble sleeping at night, he had weird cravings, he felt some weird feelings in his stomach after he ate and at bedtime. He also felt some weight in his stomach as well. Something was going on. And he was nearly always hungry too. And he couldn't help it if he nearly tripped over his own feet doing something.

Athya and Byron were easily noticing changes in the Skeksis. There were also mood swings. Some villagers complained of him to them, especially if they were an untrusting Gelfling.

Queen Athya summoned Chamberlain before her one day. He had a scroll ready to take her orders.

"Ready for orders." He said.

"I need to talk to you about something else first, Sil. I have had numerous complaints about how you were snapping at some of the villagers and they wonder if we can trust you. What's going on?" Athya asked. "You have been doing a great job for me, but I just need to know what's wrong?"

"I'm just trying to do my job with them and they get mad at me for doing nothing to them. Then it upsets me. I got that treatment back at castle and not like it." Sil said sadly.

"Well, some of the villagers may always be wary of you, but just stick to the job and don't take what they say personally. As long as they don't try to threaten you. Suth will handle that if they do. Just let us know and I'll see to it that he does." Athya said.

"Anything else?"

"Sil, just for health reasons, I want you to go see Wyneth again, just to make sure nothing is wrong. You have been having some trouble with your footing too, we have noticed, and your eyes aren't bothering you, are they?"

"No. Or sometimes."

"For that, I recommend that you go see her to make sure your vision's okay."

"Alright." He agreed reluctantly.

He went to see her the next day after he did his morning chores. He was hoping she was home and not out somewhere else. He hadn't talked to her in a while since that incident.

Sil knocked on her door. He listened. He heard footsteps inside. "Who is it?"

"Me, Chamberlain."

The door opened. "Hello, Sil. It's been a little while. What brings you by?"

"Queen Athya said for me to see you."

"What for?"

"She thinks my eyes might have problem."

"Come in then." Wyneth said.

Chamberlain walked into her home. He sat down and she began to examine his eyes just by doing some tests. She had him walk about and see how well he could see things.

"I noticed some of your footing seemed off, but your eyes seem fine to me. Has there been anything else going on? How's your eating?"

"I'm fine in eating, but hungry more than usual. And after eating, and at sleep time, belly feels weird." Sil described.

"How are your ribs?"

"Fine."

"Well, Sil, can you lay on the bed for me. From what you describe what's going in your belly, I need to examine it." Wyneth said.

He felt a little more personal about that.

"I'm sure I can find the answer if you let me look at it." She said.

Chamberlain reluctantly went over to the bed and laid back.

"I need access, so if you would lift up the clothing." Wyneth said.

Sil revealed his belly to the healer a little hesitantly.

Wyneth came over and gently put her hands on his stomach. He had always had a roundish belly, but when she looked at it, it seemed bigger than what she remembered it to be.

To him, it did kind of tickle to be touched on his belly, but then, she began to push on him.

"What are you doing?" He demanded.

"Sil, I need to press to see what the problem is. I might be able to feel what's going on, but you need to let me. I'm not trying to hurt you. Just relax and I'll be done shortly." She said.

He let out a big breath and it told her he was trying to relax his body. It gave her the cue to continue, but he continued to watch her.

Wyneth had to apply some pressure to his stomach to go deeper. She heard Sil give off a pained whimper. "Sorry." She said. She applied pressure to different sections of his belly, and eventually, she felt something. Something had moved beneath her hand!

She felt some more and it moved again.

"Pleaseâ€¦ stopâ€¦ it hurts." Sil pleaded.

Wyneth removed her hands after that. Chamberlain rubbed his belly.

"Chamberlain, did you ever by chance, have a loved one back at the castle? Or are you female?" Wyneth asked.

"I have female in me, as well as male. But how could you know about that? I never mentioned her." Sil asked.

"What I felt in your belly, Sil, is what I dealt with those three pregnant women in the village."

Sil's eyes widened. "Youâ€¦ don't meanâ€¦?"

"You are carrying your loved one's baby, or babies." Wyneth said. "What you are experiencing with symptoms: mood swings, cravings, movements, some clumsy moments; all come from being pregnant. Congratulations."

Chamberlain couldn't take it. This was so shocking. He ended up passing out. Fainting could also happen.

Wyneth had seen that reaction come more from expectant fathers. At least the Chamberlain had been on the bed.

****Beta read by SkekLa. ****

End
file.